

# The PGA knows where to play

By Stephen Delaney Hale

If you've got great South Carolina golf on your mind,  
the Carolinas PGA is waiting for you

Formed in 1923, the Carolinas PGA has almost 2,000 members working at more than 725 golf facilities to promote enjoyment and involvement in the game. Covering both Carolinas and a small portion of Virginia, the Carolinas PGA is the largest of 41 sections that make up the Professional Golfers' Association of America. The CPGA sanctions 250 tournaments a year, ranging from serious stuff that could lead to playing against Tiger and Ernie in the PGA, to a range of junior tournaments or just for family fun on the links.

More than 25,000 amateur golfers participated in their tournaments last year walking away with over \$1 million in merchandise prizes.

The CPGA also rewarded professional golfers with some \$1.5 million in tournament purses, and Carolina charities were winners to the tune of about \$300,000.

Of course the "Major" event in 2007 is the 68th Senior PGA Championship, set for May 22-27, 2007, on The Ocean Course at Kiawah Island Golf Resort, scene of the famous "War by the Shore" 1991 Ryder Cup.

South Carolina native Jay Haas will defend his title as 2006 Senior PGA Champion against the strongest field in senior golf, expected to include: Tom Watson, Greg Norman, Gary Player, Hale Irwin, Fuzzy Zoeller, Craig Stadler, Peter Jacobsen, Raymond Floyd, plus highly anticipated 2007 Senior Tour rookies Nick Price, Mark O'Meara and Fred Funk.

The first major championship in South Carolina history, the Senior PGA will combine all the pageantry of the game on one of the sport's great courses, but this one happens to include the charm of Charleston and the South Carolina Lowcountry.

"The location and timing of this championship allows for a most memorable spectator experience," says Roger Warren, president of both the PGA of America and of Kiawah Island Golf Resort.

Warren is definitely right about timing and location. Travel + Leisure Golf magazine in September 2006 named Kiawah the "top golf resort in the US." In yet another bonus, The Ocean Course moved to the #3 spot on Golf Magazine's 2006 "Top 100 you can play," a list of courses accessible to the public. The course also

maintained its 5-star status in Golf Digest's readers' poll of Best Places to Play, with the resort's other four courses each garnering a 4.5-star rating.

These accolades attest the owners' decision to pour millions of dollars into renovating the resort over the last few years. It now boasts a luxury hotel, The Sanctuary, which opened in 2004, and all of the resort's five courses have been renovated, with major work on The Ocean Course that moved its 18<sup>th</sup> hole next to the ocean. Three new clubhouses were built and The Ocean Course is set to have a new clubhouse open in time for the Senior Tournament in May.

"Spectators have a unique opportunity to enjoy major championship golf and beautiful ocean views," Warren said. "When not watching golf, our patrons may explore Kiawah Island and greater Charleston, play some of the great area courses, visit our beaches, enjoy the international Spoleto arts festival, which will be going on at the same time, tour historic homes and plantations and enjoy fine dining."

Warren and his team are also offering several great ticket bargains. Daily tickets and weekly passes are discounted as much as 50 percent when purchased before May 1, 2007, and juniors age 17 and younger are admitted free of charge when accompanied by a ticketed adult. The tourney ends on Memorial Day and members of the US Armed Forces with a valid ID will be given a free companion admission with the purchase of a ticket.

This year's patrons of the Senior PGA will have the first opportunity to purchase tickets to the 2012 PGA Championship, also to be played on The Ocean Course. Many ticketing options are available by calling 800-PGA-GOLF (800-742-4653) or at [www.SeniorPGA2007.com](http://www.SeniorPGA2007.com)

The Senior PGA Championship is just one of the CPGA's highly popular seniors' tournament scheduled which includes 11 venues throughout 2007 and is open to amateur residents age 50 and older. Prizes are awarded within age divisions at each event and points go toward earning the coveted title of "CPGA Senior Associate Player of the Year."

Of course, the CPGA includes a number of major championships that are not for the seniors' tour. Among those are the South Carolina Open, the Carolinas Open and the Carolinas PGA Section Championship. The top 11 finishers from the Section Championship are eligible for the PGA Professional National Championship. The top 20 finishers in that tournament then qualify for the PGA Championship, one of the four worldwide major tournaments.

Carolinas PGA Professionals are more than happy to help visiting golfers find that memorable South Carolina golf experience.

For more information...

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